



KEEPING SPORTS FUN!

Tips for Coaches (and Parents)

Whether you're an employee or volunteer, as a coach you have an opportunity to instill character, values and confidence in members of your team. You are a role model for the boys and girls who follow your lead. It's important to take your position seriously, but remember that even in sports, kids deserve to be kids.

Follow these rules and you'll be a coach they remember and respect forever:

DON'T FORGET THE FUN.

Most kids join a sport to learn or improve a skill, and to have fun. Begin or end your practices with a reminder that while winning is a goal, so is learning, working together, doing one's best, and having a good time.

GET ON YOUR PLAYERS' LEVEL.

As you encourage players to perform a certain way on the field, court or track, remember their ages and consider each child's temperament. Don't expect more than they are developmentally able to give, but offer them positive nudges to try new things.

ALLOW THEM TO MAKE MISTAKES.

Children will often make mistakes as they learn the rules of a game or try to keep up with their opponents or teammates. When that happens, don't tear them down. Encourage them to keep going, and after the game, offer your "constructive feedback" after applauding the things they did well.

GIVE THEM PRAISE.

Acknowledge your team's small victories, not just the wins. Maybe in a particular game one player helped another when he fell, or maybe the whole team encouraged a struggling player to keep trying. Be sure to point out these personal "wins" of character and sportsmanship and share how they equal success in other important areas of life.